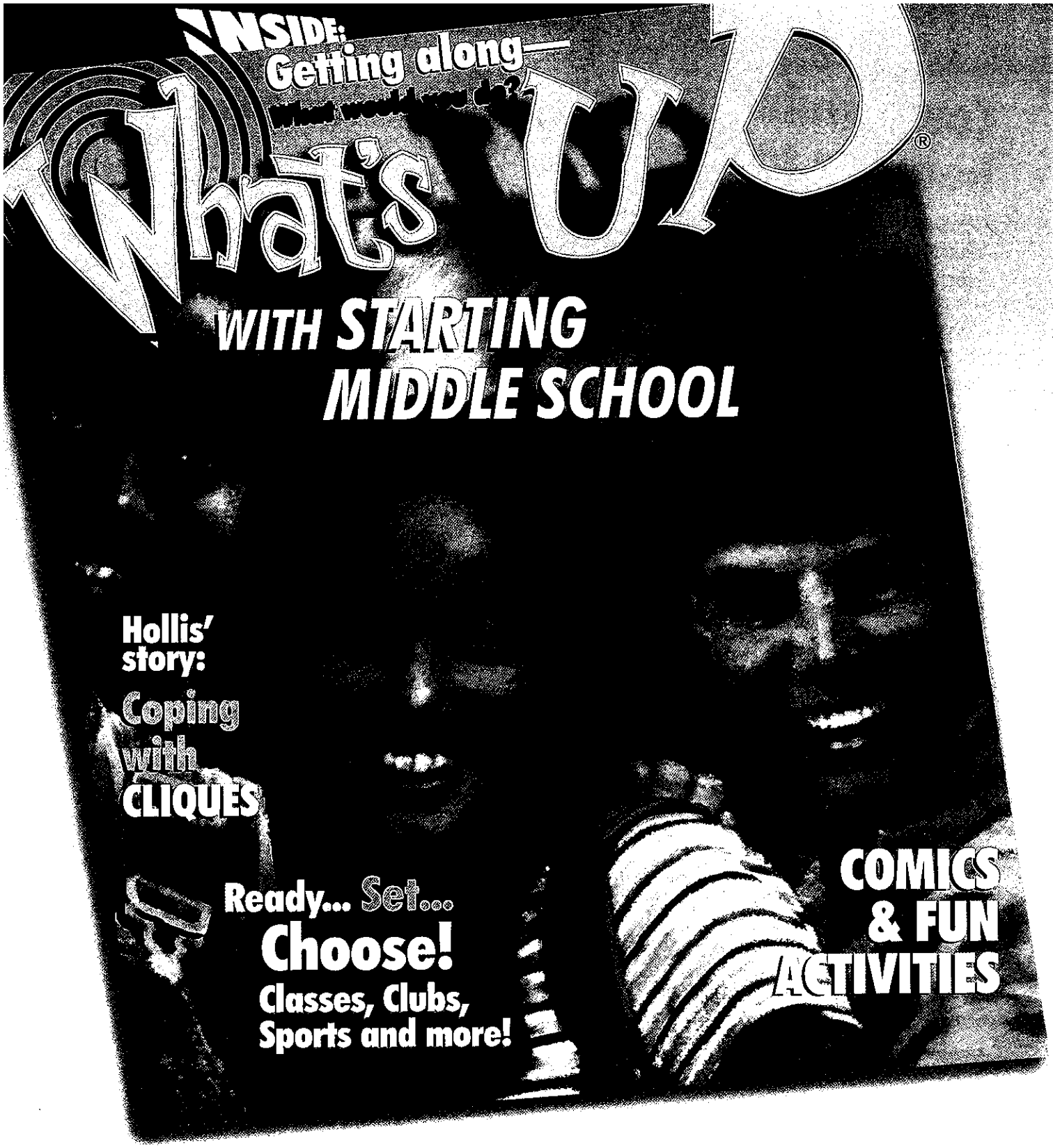

INSIDE:
Getting along—
What would you do?
What's UP®
WITH STARTING MIDDLE SCHOOL
Hollis' story:
Coping with CLIQUES
Ready... Set...
Choose!
Classes, Clubs, Sports and more!
COMICS & FUN ACTIVITIES

Congratulations—you're heading to middle school!

Sometimes you'll feel like you're on a roller coaster ride. Not to worry. That's how any big change can make you feel.

Are you up, down or somewhere in between?

Starting middle school means facing new challenges. Your feelings about what's in store are bound to change as you move ahead—and that's OK. For now, think about where you're at. Then put a check next to the things you think will make middle school challenging. Next to each item you check, write an **"E"** or an **"S"** to describe that challenge as "exciting" or "stressful."

___ ❑ remembering my class schedule

___ ❑ getting to classes on time

___ ❑ remembering my locker combination

___ ❑ crowded, busy halls

___ ❑ having more homework

___ ❑ being more responsible

___ ❑ making new friends

___ ❑ missing old friends

___ ❑ having different teachers

___ ❑ lots of unfamiliar students

___ ❑ having more independence

___ ❑ getting around a new building

___ ❑ feeling more grown-up

___ ❑ taking new subjects

___ ❑ more opportunities for sports and other activities

___ ❑ riding the bus (or having to walk farther to school)

___ ❑ being around older kids

___ ❑ sexual issues

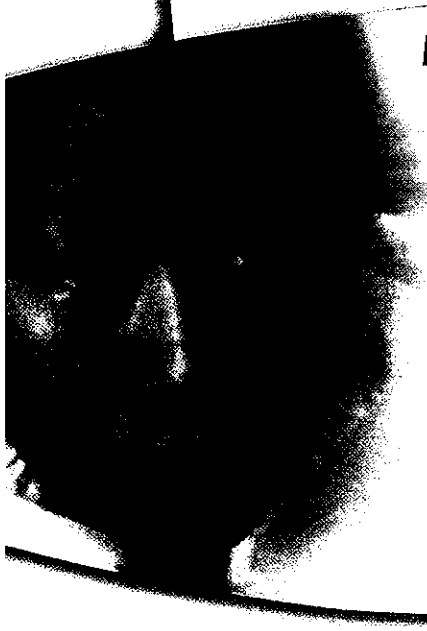
___ ❑ kids who pick fights

___ ❑ drugs

___ ❑ guns and other weapons

___ ❑ racial differences

___ ❑ dressing for gym or physical education (PE)



Many changes—many feelings

Don't be surprised if you end up having mixed feelings about some of these things. For example, lots of new middle school kids are both excited and worried about having different teachers. Which changes from the above categories give you mixed feelings? Write them down and explain why.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please read:

Talk to a professional! This magazine is not a substitute for the advice of a qualified expert. • The photos in this magazine are of models. The models have no relation to the issues presented.

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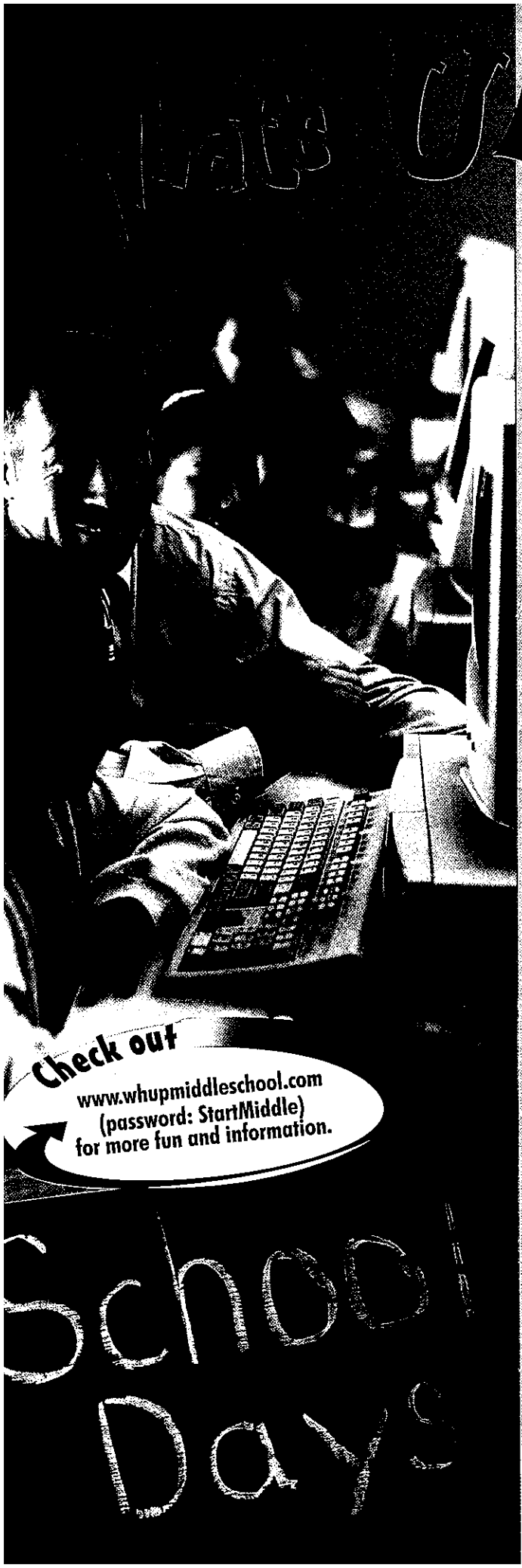

Check out
www.whupmiddleschool.com
(password: StartMiddle)
for more fun and information.

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Check it out!

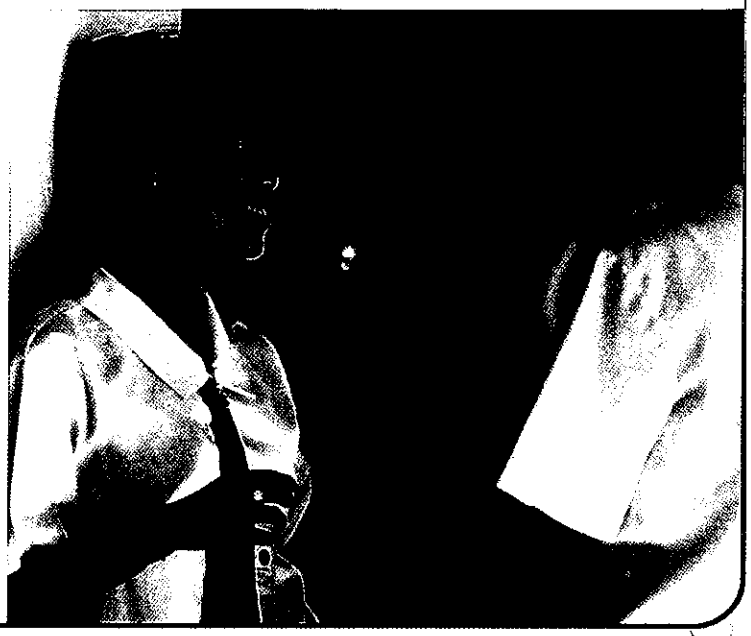
The building, that is. Take a look around before classes start, if you can. Here are some ways to keep from feeling like a rat in a maze:

Take part in orientation.

These are meetings schools may have to help new students before classes begin. They could involve:

- a visit to your elementary school by middle school representatives
- a buddy system that links current middle school students with new students
- a field trip to the middle school and a tour.

Ask questions and learn your way around ahead of time!



Talk to folks who know the ropes.

This includes older kids and adults you already know and trust. Don't be afraid to ask them questions. Lots of people will be happy to help you out!

Make a map.

If you take a field trip to your middle school, learn where the bathrooms, the cafeteria, the nurse's office and other important places are. If there's no field trip planned, ask a parent or other trusted adult to take you on a visit before school starts. Fill in the grid below with a basic map of your new school. If the school has more than one floor, make a copy for each.

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Supply central

Every middle school student needs the right stuff, including:

A backpack or book bag

While it's probably important to choose a backpack that looks cool, so is having something that's sturdy and comfortable! Protect your back by not overfilling your pack—and remember to wear both shoulder straps when carrying a load. It's better to be healthy than to look "hip."

Basic study gear

This includes having your own pens, pencils, erasers and writing paper. Showing up in middle school without any of these is like trying to play a game of hoops without a basketball.

A divided notebook or 3-ring binder

This will help you keep notes and handouts from each class separate and secure. It's also a good idea to get a homework notebook or planner to help keep track of daily homework assignments.

My no-brainer supply list

Put a check next to each item as you stock up on middle school essentials. If money is tight, ask your parents about getting the most important items first (like pens and a notebook). Then slowly build up the things you need.

- ❑ divided notebook or 3-ring binder
- ❑ key ring (for house and other keys)
- ❑ loose writing paper
- ❑ homework notebook or planner
- ❑ backpack or book bag
- ❑ wallet/change pouch
- ❑ pen and pencil pouch
- ❑ pencils
- ❑ calculator
- ❑ pens
- ❑ ruler

Unlocking your locker worries

The thought of dealing with a locker is on the mind of just about every new middle school student. (If your middle school doesn't have lockers, well, you can always store this information in your head for later use.)

Why lockers?

Your locker is your space to keep books, jackets and personal items you don't want to haul around with you all the time. If you keep it NEAT and use it well, your locker will help make life in middle school a lot easier.

What about locks?

If lockers didn't have locks, they'd probably be called something else! School lockers usually come with built-in combinations. The idea of memorizing a combination may sound like a chore at first. But you'll get the hang of it in no time!

When do I go to my locker?

You will have chances to visit your locker several times a day to pick up and drop off books. Make a stop at your locker each day before leaving school to get your books for that night's homework. Another good idea is to keep a copy of your class schedule inside your locker.

A note about lockers:

Lockers are school property. You have the right to use one assigned to you, but certain school staff may have the right to search it.

Use some *clues* to help *jog your memory.*

Locker combinations usually include 3 or 4 numbers that follow a pattern of right and left turns on the dial. Remembering your locker combination can be a challenge—especially after a long weekend or a vacation. Things like birth dates, street addresses, lucky numbers or the jersey numbers worn by favorite athletes can be good reminders!

Come up with 3 or 4 clues that relate to your locker combination. Write them in the spaces below. For example, if the first number of your combination is 15, and your Uncle Simon lives at 15 Appleton Street, write down "Uncle Simon's street address" in the first space. NOTE: Don't write down the actual numbers just in case this magazine falls into the wrong hands!

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

From chaos to order

Getting—and staying—organized may not seem like a big deal at first. But sooner or later, most middle school students discover the value of:

Natty notebooks

Natty means everything's in place. It's a good idea to have separate notebooks for each subject—or to divide subjects in the same notebook with color-coded tabs. You'll also want to make space within each subject section for:

- notes
- handouts
- homework assignments
- quizzes and tests.

A well-organized backpack

Loose papers can get chewed to pieces. Cleaning out and rearranging your backpack regularly will help keep important stuff clean and easy to find.

A clutter-free locker

No one says your idea of tidy has to match what your parents or teachers think. But locker clutter will slow you down. Every day, try to:

- Give loose papers a proper home.
- Remove any trash or food.
- Arrange books and notebooks so they can be easily seen and reached.

Most schools have rules about what can and cannot be kept in lockers. Be sure you know these rules—and follow them!

Answers (from page 18)

1. C—The first step in resolving a conflict is to learn more about the other person's point of view and also to discuss your side of the situation.
2. B—A peer mediator is someone who can listen objectively to both sides of an argument and help people work out their differences peacefully.
3. B—Part of solving conflicts is to show the other person the same respect you'd like to have if the situation were reversed.

Learning how to LEARN

in middle school means making the most of:

Class participation

Many teachers count class participation toward your grade. Why? Because discussing ideas and opinions and asking questions out loud helps keep stuff in your brain. So it's up to you to get involved!

Textbooks and reading materials

The best readers are "active" readers. That means thinking about what you've read and asking questions. Having a pen and paper to jot down notes and comments about key points in your reading is a good habit.

Class notes and handouts

Sign them, date them, and keep them handy!
When it comes time to review for a test, you'll be glad you did.

Test "prep" techniques

The last thing you want to do is wait until the night before to study for a test. Here are some tips that will make test taking go a whole lot smoother:

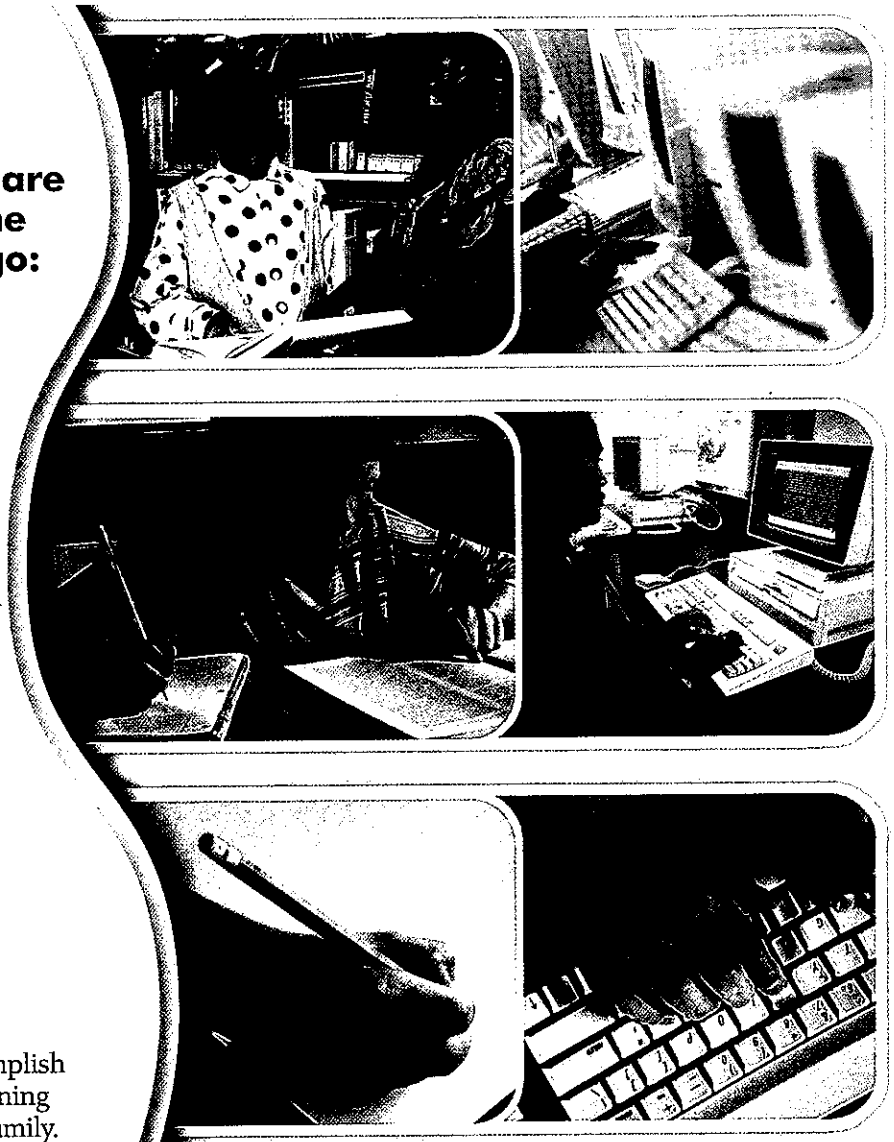
- ❑ Do a quick review each day of handouts and notes from your classes.
- ❑ Skim through chapter headings, main ideas and chapter summaries in your textbooks. Reread important sections.
- ❑ Rewrite key points in your class notes. Also rewrite any vocabulary words that may be part of the test.

Draw a circle around every third letter (starting with the third letter in the list at right) to come up with the hidden message. Then write the message in the space.

AYYBTOXRUSSCBAAMUNQRTQKR
DHATYISTNSHYCROITUOPRGYBLYR
EAADRIVSNCHTPOOMNLWHEDEA
BRRITNQYAXSNERDLYGDUATSIERN

Break it down

instead of *breaking* down! Here are a few tips on managing your time and getting where you want to go:



Make a list.

Take a minute each night to write out what you have to do the next day. Estimate the amount of time you'll need for each task. Think about getting a:

- calendar
- assignment notebook and/or day planner.

Look at the pieces.

When you have a bigger project in front of you, separate it into smaller steps. If you have 2 weeks to do a report, break it down into parts:

- gather research
- read research
- write rough draft
- edit and correct the draft
- write final report.

Reaching your goals

means making the most of your time and energy. You probably have lots of things you want to accomplish in middle school—from getting good grades, to joining a sport or activity, to having fun with friends and family.

Use this guide to help set and achieve some different goals in middle school.

#1 Short-term goal

Example: Raising my math grades

_____

_____

_____

Steps I'll need to take:

_____

_____

Possible problems and solutions:

_____

_____

People who can help:

_____

_____

Target date(s) for getting there:

_____

_____

_____

#2 Long-term goal

Example: Making the soccer team

_____

_____

_____

Steps I'll need to take:

_____

_____

Possible problems and solutions:

_____

_____

People who can help:

_____

_____

Target date(s) for getting there:

_____

_____

_____

Healthy homework habits

Steady, Eddy

You probably already know that homework is an important part of middle school success. That's why it's important to set aside regular times to do homework every day.

First things first

Doing some of your homework during study halls is a great use of time. But chances are you'll still need to bring some assignments home. So make it a rule to always get homework done before you have fun!

Comfortable and quiet, please!

Your homework will go more quickly, and you'll get a lot more out of it, if you work in a space that's pleasant and free of noise and distractions. What place in your home fits that bill?

Does your homework routine meet the test?

1. My study area has plenty of light. Yes No
2. I have a comfortable chair to sit in while I study. Yes No
3. My homework area is away from the TV, telephone and other distractions. Yes No
4. I have plenty of pens, paper, books and supplies close to my study area. Yes No
5. An older family member is nearby to help answer homework questions if I have them. Yes No
6. My study area is fairly quiet (for example, I can barely hear my brother practicing his guitar). Yes No
7. My friends know not to call or stop by during homework time. Yes No
8. I only use the Internet for study-related activities when I'm doing homework. Yes No
9. I know what to do because I bring my homework assignment notebook home every day. Yes No

How'd you do? **The more yes answers you had, the better. If you answered no a few times, do what you can to improve your homework habits. For help, go to the *What's Up WITH STARTING MIDDLE SCHOOL* Web site for your very own homework planner.**